

IL-DOROBO

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covered with a strip of soft hide—often that of reedbuck or impala—worked to a state of pliability resembling that of chamois leather. The barb is never coated with poison under any circumstance. 411

A small supply of fresh poison (*agwawo*) is sometimes carried in the heel of the quiver. This poison is a black, sticky mass made by boiling the leaves of a certain tree and is manufactured exclusively by the Wakamba. The Dorobo know nothing about it, hold it in considerable awe, and have never attempted to make poison of their own.¹ [278] [439]

In the quiver is also carried a fire-stick (*Ol-kiriageti*) and a fire-block (*asawada*). The Dorobo are experts at making fire and scorn to use matches. A small flat spoon (*kasulwandes*) for smearing poison on the arrow-heads is also carried—this spoon is made from the same wood as the bow; and a small knife for smoothing and rounding the arrow-shafts. This knife is called *oweta silila*.² A wooden tube about twelve to eighteen inches long and a quarter of an inch in diameter, not unlike a peashooter, will always be found in a Dorobo quiver. This tube, called *owades*, is used for drinking from pools which are shallow or which have a dirty, scummy surface. (It is a point of honour with every Dorobo and an unwritten bush law that a man should not stir up the mud in any water at which he drinks.) The *owades* is also used to induce, by blowing through it, a blaze or clouds of smoke from lighted grass put into a hive to drive the bees away from the honey. 372 • 410 [571] 102

A Dorobo quiver, as we have seen, contains a large number of objects essential to the bush life that the Dorobo leads. It is scarcely to be wondered at, therefore, that it is next to impossible to purchase a furnished one. A Dorobo once told me (I am sure he meant it) that he would not exchange his quiver and its contents for five oxen. The price habitually paid to the parents of a girl taken in marriage is from two to five arrows, and a demand on the parents' part for a full quiver would be regarded as extortionate. 415 [583]

The Dorobo may be seen sometimes with a small axe which 412

¹ That is, arrow poison. The Dorobo are reputed to have a powerful poison they mix with urea. When inhaled, it is stated to have a fatal result. I have been unable to obtain a specimen of this poison and doubt its existence. [278]

² Literally, "Small knife."

II.—MODE OF CONSTRUCTION.

Houses.

The Dorobo live in little shelters or huts (*hukupet*, pl. *hukupetich*; *H. larid*) built in small clearings in the forest; they are made of a framework of sticks stuck in the ground, and bent over, forming a domed roof; the whole is covered on the outside with leaves of trees and banana leaves, which are insufficient, in spite of the addition of an ox-hide on the top, to keep the hut dry inside when it rains. The upright sticks are strengthened by others tied across them with tree-rings. The huts are oblong, with rounded ends, and are of the following average dimensions:—Height, 3 ft. 10 in.; width, 7 ft. 6 in.; length, 11 ft. They are occupied for two or three months, after which they become ruinous and "fall of decay," when the family moves to a fresh site. Two to four people live in one hut. One group of huts we saw contained two huts, and had contained a third which had been pulled down. The huts are divided into two parts, the sleeping-place (*ukita*, N.) and the fire-place, which are separated by two or three poles laid across the floor of the hut, on one side of which are laid ox-hides (*mutul*; N. *mutul*), upon which the occupants sit and sleep; at night they cover themselves with skins. In the other half of the hut is the door (*hukut*, N.), about 2 ft. high. Some huts have two doors, opposite each other. Between the door and the sleeping-place is the hearth (*mut*, N.), consisting of two or three smallish stones set on the floor. A loft (*mutul*, N.) is sometimes made in this part of the hut, extending across the width, and ending at the beginning of the sleeping-place. The loft is about 2 ft. 6 in. above the floor, and is made of thin sticks supported on thicker cross-sticks, and tied together with tree-rings. Upon it are kept firewood and elephant grain (*Test-figs.* 20-22). The only household utensils are a small basket (*ukutich*) about 14 in. long, made of a bush-bark's tail fastened to a thin wooden handle, for sweeping the floor; "water jars" (*mut*) made of a hollowed piece of bamboo about 14 in. wide and 2 ft. 8 in. long; a grindstone (*ukita*, N.) made of granite, for sharpening knives, and for grinding elephant grain. Goods and earthenware pots are obtained from the Nandi; the Dorobo have no stock. Fire is produced by means of fire-sticks (*ukit*; N. *ukit*) (*Test-figs.* 11a, 11b). A thin stick of the charcoal tree (N.)¹ about 15 in. long and $\frac{1}{2}$ in. thick, is stood upright on a stick of cedar (*mut*)² about 20 in. long and 1 in. wide. The thin stick is called *ukit*, the cedar stick *tammut*. The *ukit* is held between the palms of the hands, and the hands are rapidly rubbed together, beginning at the top of the *ukit* and working downwards (*Pl. XXVI, Fig. 3*). This is repeated until fire is obtained; the *ukit* drills a hole in the *tammut*, and the heated wood-dust thus produced falls on to a knife-blade which is placed underneath. When sufficient heat is obtained it is laid on a small bundle of tinder (*mut* [*day*] *grace*) or fibre of the *mut* (*tree*), and blown till the tinder kindles.

¹ *Ficus* sp.² *Juniperus procera*.³ *Stemodia* sp.

The Khamti-Khyapmali Darts (Shik) of Kongo Colony.

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FIG. 1.—DART SHIK (Khamti) AND DART SHIK (Khamti). FIG. 2.—DART (Khamti). FIG. 3.—DART (Khamti). FIG. 4.—DART (Khamti). FIG. 5.—DART (Khamti). FIG. 6.—DART (Khamti). FIG. 7.—DART (Khamti). FIG. 8.—DART (Khamti). FIG. 9.—DART (Khamti). FIG. 10.—DART (Khamti). FIG. 11.—DART (Khamti). (a) point, (b) handle. FIG. 12.—DART SHIK (Khamti). SHIK, & SHIK.

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FIG. 1.—GIRL WEARING PITH CAP "GABBIT."



FIG. 2.—GIRL WEARING PITH WITH PLEATED "POCKET."

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FIG. 3.—GIRL WEARING "BUSHMAN" WEARING
SHE-SHEEN "TURTLE" SHOWING WHAT SHE
WEARS IN HER SKIRT.



FIG. 4.—TWO GIRLS "BUSHMAN." THE GIRL
ON THE LEFT IS WEARING A SKIRT-
LACE OF "LEOPARD" SKIN AS A TRAIL
ABOUT THE PITH SKIRT; THE GIRL ON THE
RIGHT IS WEARING A SKIRT-
LACE OF THE SKIN OF A BUSHMAN.
BOTH ARE WEARING "BUSHMAN" SKIRT-
LACE OF WOOD IN THE SKIRT.

[Facing P. 378, A]

WIGGIE HUTTEN.

- 313 *Rerendet* (euphorbia candelabrum) : honey-barrels.
 824 *Mocet* : honey-barrels.
Oluemiyuit or *Yemdut* (olive, *olea chrysophylla*) : fire-wood.
Enyastek : fire-wood.
Corwet (*licus* sp.) : fire-sticks.
Teet (cedar, *juniperus procera*) : fire-sticks.

824 (B) Plant material. The following trees and plants provide material for food, salt, medicines, and utensils*:

- 372 *Sasiet* (dry grass) : tinder for making fire with fire-sticks.
 285 † *Taparariet* : fibre for baskets.
 271 *Sosiet* (*Phoenix reclinata* palm) : fibre for baskets.
 † *Tiinet* : medicine.
 † *Opeito* : medicine.
Rerendet : medicine.
Lepuyuwet : medicine.
Sitotuet : medicine.
Sehetet : medicine.
Usuet (*ardisia* sp.) : medicine.
 263 *Tepenguet* (*acmilia integrifolia*) : salt.
Serenguet : salt.
 273 *Rotinet* or *Rotiet* (*kigelia aethiopica*) : making honey-wine.

825 (C) Skins and animal products. These include:

- 237 † Monkey : food ; clothing.
 291 † Antelope : food ; clothing ; bags ; quivers.
 411 Pig-gut : bow-strings.
 Feathers : arrows.
 † Honey : food ; wine ; ritual purposes.
 Ram's fat : ritual purposes.
 583 Goats : bride-payment ; ritual purposes.
 412 Cattle : bride-payment ; milk ; dung ; hides.
 Bush-buck : tails for brooms.

285 The basket most commonly made by the Dorobo is the small *keropet*, about 6 inches deep and 6 1/2 inches wide at the top. This kind of basket is used a good deal by the Dorobo themselves, and is also a frequent article of sale or exchange to the Nandi : *kinapci kereponih Nandi*, "we make baskets for the Nandi", as an old woman said. Dorobo women make baskets when they have nothing particular to do, just as European women knit. The materials used are fibre from the midrib of the *sosiet* palm, which is split into thin strips, and bast from a plant called *taparariet* which is used for sewing the coils of fibre with the aid of a small needle (Fig. 1).² The basket maker starts by splitting the *sosiet* fibre, preparing a certain length and biting it off as she

[439] * Things marked with a dagger † are used in the preparation of objects given to the Nandi in exchange for their products.

² [i.e. see category 116 & 617 - ANALYST.]

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MAN.

[1902]

They are said to be very prolific, having families of eight to ten children, but the infant mortality is so extremely heavy that their numbers increase very slowly; this mortality is probably due to the cold, damp climate of the Mau Forests, which are at an altitude ranging from 7,000 to 9,000 feet.

Their peace ceremony consists of cutting off a dog's ears, and the contracting parties then spatter one another with the blood.

They live principally on Colobus and other monkeys, which they shoot in the forest. At certain seasons, however, they go and hunt big game on the plains, known as the Rangata Nyuki; they wait till the grass is dry, and then burn it to facilitate their hunting. They use poisoned arrows for big game, and unpoisoned ones for monkeys, etc. They train dogs to assist in their hunting, and are very keen to get young dogs for the purpose. They told me that they first gave the dog certain medicine, and the animal could then track game.

They are very clever elephant hunters, and informed me that when they came across an elephant they went off and bathed and scrubbed themselves very carefully to remove all trace of the human scent, and that they were then able to approach a sleeping elephant and spear it with a poisoned dart.

They are most expert in the use of a frustick. The fire is produced in the ordinary way by the friction of one stick upon round vertically in a depression in another piece of wood, which is held firm between the bare feet of the operator; the lower piece of wood appeared to be the jaw-jaw of Mau.

A small vocabulary of their language is appended on the opposite page. They use the Nandi numerals.

The prefix "ki," and the suffixes "-et," "-it," and "-ek," are, I think, brought in from the Nandi language, but most of the roots will be found to be quite distinct. Many of the tribe can only speak Nandi, and when collecting this vocabulary in many cases they appeared to have forgotten the Oggik or Ometik word but gave the Nandi word, and had to consult among themselves and, as it were, hunt up the proper word. The language is thus evidently dropping into such disuse that it will probably become quite extinct in the near future.

G. W. HOBLEY

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